

WINTER HOLIDAY WASTE REDUCTION TIPS



SHOPPING TIPS:

- Use canvas shopping bags for groceries and other holiday shopping.
- Consolidate trips to the store, it saves gas and time.

GIFT WRAPPING TIPS:

- Use your document shredder on those leftover wrap scraps and create colorful packing for gift bags and boxes.
- Fill a canvas shopping bag or a pail (both useful items) with theme gifts (bath supplies, craft supplies, etc.) for a double gift that creates no waste.
- Buy end of season fabric to make gift bags that can be reused year after year.
- Save pretty calendar or magazine pictures to re-use as wrapping paper for gifts.
- Use wallpaper scraps as wrapping paper
- Have kids decorate grocery bag paper with markers to wrap gifts or use old homework papers.
- Use Sunday Comics for wrapping paper.
- Wrap a holiday gift in a pretty new kitchen or hand towel ...the reusable towel's part of the "gift"
- Re-use Pringle and other chip tube style containers as holiday gift boxes. Wash, rinse and dry to ensure they are clean. Then glue or tape calendar or magazine pictures; brown paper (grocery bags); or wrapping paper onto them.
- If you have one of those can openers that do not leave jagged edges (i.e. the kind from Pampered Chef), reuse your cans as packages for gifts. Wash, rinse and dry to ensure they are clean. Then glue or tape calendar pictures, brown paper (grocery bags), or wrapping paper onto them. Draw a circle just smaller than the lid on the same paper and glue or tape it to the top. Top can be taped on or simple held in place with holiday ribbon. It's especially strong packaging for fragile gifts.
- Re-use paper towel or toilet paper tubes for your very small gifts. Simply cover the tube with a magazine picture, bright tissue, or wrapping paper and fold down the sides 1" at each end.
- Trim gifts with fragrant snips from evergreens, pine cones, non-poisonous berries &/or dried flowers. Tie children's packages with bright colored shoelaces ... which can then be used to lace their sneakers.
- Reuse packing peanuts or bubble wrap. Use starch peanuts but include a note letting people know these can be washed away not recycled with Styrofoam.

LOW-WASTE GIFT IDEAS:

- Give the gift of time. The holidays are built on memories of time spent together ... baking cookies, caroling, family gatherings, etc.
- Give a gift certificate. If you can't figure out what would be the perfect gift for someone, maybe providing them a gift certificate to a mall, theater, gas station, or local grocery store would be more practical and appreciated.
- Give environmentally friendly gifts such as battery free electronic devices that work by hand cranks. Radios and flashlights are readily available that have 'crank' power.
- Give two gifts in one by using a basket, scarf, towel or pillowcase to wrap your gift.
- Look for durable and recycled products and holiday cards.
- Other ideas-
 - ✓ make homemade bread and deliver it every week for a month
 - ✓ collect family recipes and compile in a wooden recipe box
 - ✓ make one dinner a week for a month that you deliver
 - ✓ offer baby-sitting time
 - ✓ offer a monthly lunch date with an elderly relative or friend
 - ✓ offer free lessons in a sport in which you excel
 - ✓ offer to weed a friend's garden in the spring or summer

- ✓ offer your talents, such as photography, financial planning, or hairstyling
- ✓ put together a photo album
- ✓ make a video of people the gift recipient loves
- ✓ offer to do a chore for a month that a family member dislikes
- ✓ give tickets to a concert or sporting event
- ✓ give tickets to a ski area
- ✓ give frequent flyer miles
- ✓ give a museum pass or membership
- ✓ give an experience (a day kayaking)
- ✓ provide a gift certificate for a lesson (tennis, swimming, drums, for example)
- ✓ provide a gift certificate for a dinner for two
- ✓ donate to an organization in the name of a friend or relative, in a subject area that interests them
- ✓ give a gift certificate to a used book store
- ✓ give a plant or a tree
- ✓ Give a membership to a nonprofit organization that protects natural resources

DECORATING IDEAS:

- From Home Power magazine: The US Department of Energy reports that each year in the US, holiday lights consume 2.2 terawatt-hours (that's 2.2 billion kilowatt-hours) of electricity. At 10 cents per KWH, that's \$220 million annually to power our holiday displays. What you can do: switch your incandescent light strings to LEDs (light-emitting diodes), which use 90 percent less energy. LED strings are available in a variety of colors, and you can buy them at most stores that carry holiday lighting. Solar holiday lights are also available, using energy at no cost.
- Use decorations that can be composted or used as bird food after the holidays
- After the holidays, place your live Christmas tree near your bird feeders to provide shelter to the birds before composting or mulching it in the spring.

PARTY IDEAS:

- Have guests bring containers to take home leftovers
- Use washable plates, napkins, glasses and flatware whenever possible

CELEBRATING ENVIRONMENTALLY

- For Hanukkah, dedicate each of the eight nights you light the Menorah to switching out an incandescent bulb to a lower energy CFL.
- Whether lighting candles for Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa or any other holiday, make sure the wicks are lead free.
- Give greeting cards a second life by donating them to a local craft organization, senior center or retirement community. Call first to make sure they can use them.

MORE IDEAS:

42 Ways to Trim Your Holiday Wasteline, <http://cygnus-group.com/use-less-stuff/ULSDAY/42ways.html>

Simplify the holidays - New Dream <http://www.newdream.org/holiday/tips.php>

US EPA <http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/osw/specials/funfacts/winter.htm>

California <http://www.ciwm.ca.gov/PublicEd/Holidays/default.htm>

Sonoma County, CA http://www.recyclenow.org/o_wastereduction_xmas02.html

North Carolina http://www.p2pays.org/news/press_releases/121702.asp

Charlotte, NC <http://www.charmeck.org/Departments/LUESA/Solid+Waste/Residential+Waste+Reduction/holidaytips.htm>

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, <http://www.coejl.org/~coejlor/celebrate/index.php>

Great Lakes Region Pollution Prevention Roundtable list of holiday waste reduction websites,

http://www.glrppr.org/docs/p2_for_the_holidays.htm

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Enjoy the holidays!